

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

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JCS
CINCUSAFE
HQ 3AF RAF MILDENHALL
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EUCOM AND USAFE ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, OCLR, GW, UK, NL

SUBJECT: PROJECT CONSTANT TREAT

REF: (A) LONDON 5955 (B) STATE 91960

1. REPORTS OF U-2 PRESENCE AT RAF WETHERSFIELD AND
COMMENTS ON THEIR USE APPEARED IN LONDON PRESS OVER
PAST HOLIDAY WEEKEND. MOD HAS ANSWERED QUERIES THROUGH
OUT PERIOD BY DRAWING ON GUIDANCE APPROVED REF. A.

2. BOTH SUNDAY TELEGRAM AND OBSERVER OF MAY 25 REPORTED
BRIEFLY THAT MOD HAD CONFIRMED THREE-MONTH DEPLOYMENT TO
RAF WETHERSFIELD OF FIVE U-2 AIRCRAFT FOR "AN OPERATION-
AL TEST OVER SEVERAL ALLIED COUNTRIES OF A PRECISION,
HIGH-ALTITUDE NAVIGATION SYSTEM." THE OBSERVER REPORTED
THAT FRANK ALLAUN, A LEFT WING LABOUR MP, PLANNED TO
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PROTEST IN THE COMMONS THE PLANES' PRESENCE IN BRITAIN

AS A "PROVOCATIVE SITUATION" OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO "SPY ON EASTERN EUROPE".

3. THE GUARDIAN PICKED UP THE STORY ON MAY 26, HOMING IN ON THE ALLAUN CHARGES THAT THE U-2'S HAD A "SPY" MISSION AND EFFECTIVELY DEMOLISHING THEM. NOTING THE MOD STATEMENT THAT THE AIRCRAFT ARE UNARMED AND WILL TAKE NO PHOTOGRAPHS, THE GUARDIAN POINTS OUT THAT, SINCE THE USSR DEMONSTRATED IN 1960 ITS CAPABILITY TO SHOOT DOWN U-2'S VIOLATING ITS TERRITORY, U-2 MISSIONS HAVE BEEN "...CONFINED TO AREAS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST WHERE FORCES ON THE GROUND DO NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY OF DESTROYING (THEM)...THE AMERICANS HAVE HAD A U-2 BASED IN CYPRUS, AT RAF AKROTIRI," FOR THAT PURPOSE. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO STATE THAT RECONNAISSANCE OVER EASTERN EUROPE IS NOW COLLECTED EITHER BY SATELLITE OR BY HIGH SPEED, HIGH ALTITUDE SR-71 BLACKBIRD AIRCRAFT.

4. COMMENT. WHILE REVELATION OF U-2 PRESENCE IN BRITAIN MAY HAVE APPEARED ON A PARTICULARLY SLOW NEWS DAY, THE REPORTS HAVE GENERATED VERY LITTLE FOLLOWUP INTEREST. WITH MOST POLITICANS AND MEDIA FOCUSED ON TRYING TO INTEREST A WEARY BODY POLITIC IN NEXT WEEK'S EEC REFERENDUM, PUBLIC REACTION TO THE U-2 PRESENCE - WHERE THERE HAS BEEN ONE - HAS TAKEN THE FORM OF A MASSIVE YAWN. ONCE PARLIAMENT RESUMES SITTING AFTER THE EEC REFERENDUM, HOWEVER, ALLAUN AND HIS TRIBUNITE ALLIES ARE CERTAIN TO PUT DOWN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS WITH A VIEW TO EMBARRASSING THE GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER.

SPIERS

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